

# **County of San Diego Floodplain Management Plan Progress Report**

Reporting Period: October 2009 through September 2010

**Background:** The County of San Diego's (County) Floodplain Management Plan (FMP) provides its vision for reducing the County's risk from flooding. The plan identifies strategies and actions, resource requirements and Department responsibilities.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this report is to provide the Board of Supervisors, stakeholders and the citizens of the County an annual update on the implementation of the action plan identified in the FMP. The objective of this annual evaluation is to ensure that there is a continuing and responsive planning process that will keep the County's FMP dynamic and responsive to changing needs and resource capabilities.

## **I. Flood Related Events within the County during the Past Year**

No significant flood events occurred in the County of San Diego during the reporting period.

## **II. Mitigation Success Stories**

**Community Rating System (CRS) Class 7 Rating** – On May 1, 2010, the County achieved a Class 7 rating in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) CRS program. The Class 7 rating was awarded in recognition of the County's efforts to eliminate or reduce the exposure of property owners and residents to flooding.

Property owners in high risk areas of the unincorporated areas of the County who renew or apply for flood insurance will now save fifteen percent on their policies thanks to the new federal rating. Citing flood hazard improvements made by the County, FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) improved the County's rating in 2010 from a "Class 8" to "Class 7," allowing for the rate reduction.

Participation in the CRS is limited to compliant NFIP communities that exceed the minimum NFIP floodplain management standards in areas such as public information, mapping and regulations, flood damage reduction, and flood preparedness. Credit points are assigned to each of the above categories, and a CRS classification is assigned based on the credit points. The classification determines the premium discount for policyholders. Premium discounts of up to 45% are possible under the CRS.

## **Updated Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan**

In February 2010, the County updated its Hazard Mitigation Plan. This countywide plan identifies ways to minimize damage from both natural and man-made disasters affecting San Diego County and its incorporated areas, including flooding. It was prepared with input from community officials and residents, the San Diego County Water Authority, the California Emergency Management Agency and FEMA, with the intent to encourage:

- public awareness and understanding of natural and man-made hazards;
- compliance with State and Federal program requirements;
- inter-jurisdictional coordination of hazard mitigation activities; and
- the enhancement of local policies for hazard mitigation capability.

This plan must be updated every five years in order to qualify for future funding under the Federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. A copy of the completed plan can be viewed at the following link

[http://www.sdcountry.ca.gov/oes/docs/2010\\_Final\\_Draft\\_HazMit\\_Plan\\_02-10-10.pdf](http://www.sdcountry.ca.gov/oes/docs/2010_Final_Draft_HazMit_Plan_02-10-10.pdf)

## **StormReady® Designation by the National Weather Service**

San Diego County was designated by the National Weather Service (NWS) as a “StormReady Community” in December 2009. StormReady® is a program that helps municipalities and counties be prepared for the multiple hazards that can affect them as a result of severe weather. The goal of the program is to “provide the necessary communication and safety tools to communities across the nation to help prepare them to save lives and property within their communities during a severe weather event.”

To achieve StormReady® status, the County had to go through several steps including:

- Providing documentation regarding the County’s 24-hour warning and emergency operations
- Developing three or more methods of receiving severe weather forecasts and warnings and alerting the public
- Creating and administering a system that monitors local weather conditions
- Promote the significance of public readiness through community seminars
- Developing a formal hazardous weather plan, which includes training and conducting exercises and the use of severe weather spotters.

## **ReadySanDiego.org – New Initiatives**

The ReadySanDiego.org website, implemented by San Diego County’s Office of Emergency Services (OES), is intended to educate County citizens on how to prepare for and respond to natural and man-made disasters. The site showcases information about AlertSanDiego, the County’s regional emergency notification system, which

received national praise and attention for its role in safely evacuating more than 515,000 people during the 2007 wildfires.

Recent initiatives featured on the ReadySanDiego site include:

*1. Establishment of the ReadySanDiego Business Alliance*

Formed in late 2009, this partnership program seeks to create a coalition of businesses that commit to contribute resources and expertise before, during, and after crisis situations in the County. There are currently over 170 members of the Business Alliance.

The goals and objectives of the alliance are to:

- Raise awareness of the need to prepare businesses and their employees for emergencies;
- Increase the number of County residents who are better prepared for disasters;
- Promote private/public partnerships to extend the message of disaster preparedness into the community;
- Develop tools to reach all segments of the community.

The County OES received a 2010 Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties for the establishment of the ReadySanDiego Business Alliance.

*2. Usage of Social Media Tools to Connect with County Residents*

In September 2009, a blog was launched on the ReadySanDiego website to provide County residents with current information on local disasters, emergency preparedness tips, and updates on efforts by the County to remain disaster-ready. ReadySanDiego.org also now utilizes other social media tools, including Facebook and Twitter, to better communicate the message of disaster preparedness to its younger, more technological-savvy citizens.

## **Disaster Corps**

The County Office of Emergency Services has been selected by the state to participate in Disaster Corps, a program to standardize and coordinate highly-trained volunteers that will be able to respond to disasters across the state.

“The concept behind this program started after the 2007 wildfires that impacted San Diego County and the rest of Southern California. The state recognized the invaluable role that volunteers played and created a formal program to incorporate volunteers into the state emergency plan.

The County of San Diego is among five founding members of Disaster Corps that will receive \$1.15 million in federal homeland security funding through California Volunteers, the state office that coordinates volunteer activities related to disaster response and recovery.

Disaster Corps volunteers will be registered by their local government organization and will meet Disaster Corps training, typing, certification and security screening guidelines, allowing the volunteers to respond to any disaster in the state.

The funds will be used for the initial implementation of the program, which will support training and credentialing for 1,000 members as well as a volunteer coordinator in each of the five counties.

### **III. Review of the Action Plan**

The section that follows reviews the action plan and provides the status of each initiative. The action plan matrix provides the following information:

- Brief summary of the initiative
- Responsible Department
- Priority
- Time Line
- Status

Reviewers of this report should refer to the Floodplain Management Plan (<http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/dpw/flood.html>) for more detailed descriptions of each initiative and the prioritization process. Under the “status” section the following questions are addressed with regards to each initiative:

- If no action was completed, why?
- Is the timeline for implementation for the initiative still appropriate?
- If the initiative was completed, does it need to be changed or removed from the action plan?

## Status of Action Items

Action Item	Responsible Office	Priority	Deadlines	Status
5-year Floodplain Management Plan Review and Update	Flood Control District Mitigation Planning Committee	High	September 2012 June 2012	Scheduled for FY 2012
Monitor Mitigation Plan actions and report progress annually	Flood Control District  County Departments	High	Oct. 1 annually  August 1 annually	Completed for 2010
Adopt a resolution appointing the Flood Mitigation Planning Committee	Board of Supervisors	High	January 2008 Changed to 2010. Changed to 2011.	Rescheduled for 2011. The Committee will be responsible for developing the 2012 Floodplain Management Plan.
Maintain adequate Building Inspection staff and provide training and resources needed for a Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule (BCEGS) rating of 3/3.	Department of Planning and Land Use	Very High	Ongoing	Training is provided to the Building Code Staff. The County received a BCEGS review from the Insurance Services Office in January 2009 and received a rating of 2/3.
Enforce the International Building Codes	Department of Planning and Land Use	High	Ongoing	Approximately 5,000 permits are reviewed each year.

Action Item	Responsible Office	Priority	Deadlines	Status
Draft freeboard regulations	Department of Public Works	Moderate	January 2009	The County amended its Floodplain management requirements to include 1 foot of freeboard. Adopted August 2009. <b>(Action item complete.)</b>
Hold hearing and consider adoption of Freeboard Regulations.	Department of Public Works	Moderate	March 2009	Hearings were held in the summer 2009 to allow for public comment on adoption of the freeboard requirement. <b>(Action item complete.)</b>
Maintain Flood Maps and Data	Department of Public Works	High	Ongoing	All FEMA Letters changing maps are added to the system as needed.  Paper copies of the Flood Insurance Study and Flood Insurance Rate Maps are available at DPW offices and County Libraries.  The County is continuing to work with FEMA to ensure the most up-to-date information is included in the Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM) currently being produced. This includes sharing its digital base map and topographic data.  New maps are added as they are updated by FEMA.

Action Item	Responsible Office	Priority	Deadlines	Status
Draft Critical Facility Regulations	Department of Public Works	High	January 2010  Changed to 2011	This regulation change was considered in 2009 but deferred for further consideration until 2011.
Hold hearing and consider adoption of Critical Facility Regulations.	Board of Supervisors	High	March 2010  Changed to 2011	This regulation change was considered in 2009 but deferred for further consideration until 2011.
Draft Cumulative Substantial Improvement Regulations	Department of Public Works	Moderate	June 2009	Evaluated during 2009. County did not include this provision in its updated ordinances adopted in August 2009.  <b>(Action item complete.)</b>
Hold hearing and consider adoption of Addition and Cumulative Substantial Improvement Rules	Board of Supervisors	Moderate	September 2009	Evaluated during 2009. County did not include this provision in its updated ordinances adopted in August 2009.  <b>(Action item complete.)</b>
Conduct a study on the benefits of adding a Repetitive Loss Provision to the Flood Ordinance	Department of Public Works	Moderate	September 2009	This provision was incorporated into the County's floodplain management ordinance and adopted in August 2009.  <b>(Action item complete.)</b>
Ensure Erosion and Sedimentation Permits are obtained	Department of Public Works	Moderate	Ongoing	Permit reviews are ongoing.

Action Item	Responsible Office	Priority	Deadlines	Status
Continue to enforce Stream Dumping Regulations	Department of Public Works	Moderate	Ongoing	Enforcement of stream dumping is ongoing.
Continue to maintain the Drainage System	Department of Public Works	High	Ongoing	Planned inspections and maintenance to ensure the carrying capacity of channels and detention basins was performed in accordance with SOPs and County's schedules
Continue to enforce the County's Stormwater Regulations	Department of Public Works	High	Ongoing	Enforcement is ongoing.
Study of the drainage system and make recommendations on needed improvements	Department of Public Works	High	Ongoing	Completion or update to 10 Drainage Facilities Master Plans are underway or complete. The results will form the basis of future drainage capital improvement plans. It is anticipated that all 10 plans will be finalized by January 2013.
Document damages from inadequate drainage and develop a Capital Improvements program to eliminate problem sites.	Department of Public Works	High	Ongoing	There are 19 drainage improvements projects outlined in the Department of Public Works' 5 Year Capital Improvement Plan (FY 2008-2009 through FY 2012-2013)



Action Item	Responsible Office	Priority	Deadlines	Status
Adopt an updated Emergency Operations Plan that includes Hazard Mitigation Actions and identifies resources needed to accomplish response and mitigation Tasks	Emergency Services and the Board of Supervisors	High	January 2009	Review of 2007 plan conducted in 2009. An updated Operational Area Emergency Plan is scheduled to be complete by December 2010.
Conduct an annual exercise of the Emergency Operations Plan	Emergency Services	High	Ongoing – Annually	2 Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) exercises were conducted in October 2009 and April 2010. The County also participated in the Golden Guardian statewide preparedness exercise in May 2010.
Prepare an application for designation as a StormReady Community.	Emergency Services	Low	October 2009	County was designated as a StormReady Community in December 2009.  <b>(Action item complete.)</b>
Provide adequate maintenance for ALERT system components	Department of Public Works	High	Ongoing	The ALERT system remains a high priority for the County. Promotional incentives, social media outlets such as Facebook and Twitter, and the ReadySanDiego.org website are being used to further encourage public participation in the ALERT system.

Action Item	Responsible Office	Priority	Deadlines	Status
Continue the public awareness program “Preparedness Starts with You”	Emergency Services	High	Ongoing	Campaign continues – program materials are available through the County’s Office of Emergency Services website, ReadySanDiego.org
Incorporate updated FEMA digital FIRM data into SANGIS	Building Division and Department of Public Works	High	2008 Changed to 2011.	Issuance of FEMA digital FIRM was delayed. Updated flood hazard information to be integrated once effective.
Provide Flood Map Information to the public (residents, business owners, developers, realtors, insurance agents, lenders)	Building Division and Department of Public Works	High	Ongoing	Flood Control Counter staff at the County Operations Center Annex provide flood hazard and insurance information to the public.  Updated information on CRS and floodplain information services provided by the County were shared with local associations and their members in August 2010.
Send Flood Mitigation Brochures to the public (residents, business owners, developers, realtors, insurance agents, lenders)	Department of Land Use and Planning and Department of Public Works	High	Annually	A Flood Mitigation brochure was mailed to 4,466 residents located in or near the Special Flood Hazard Area designated by FEMA.  An updated mailing was released in August 2010.

Action Item	Responsible Office	Priority	Deadlines	Status
Prepare News Releases on Property Protection Measures and progress made in implementing the Mitigation Plan	Department of Public Works	Moderate	Quarterly	News Releases published in 2010 included:  <b>County to Received StormReady Recognition from NWS (12/9/2009)</b>  <b>Residents Urged to Prepare for Coming Winter Storms (1/15/2010)</b>  <b>San Diego County Earns New Rating for Flood Insurance (5/24/2010)</b>  <b>Sign up for Emergency Alerts, Get Free Pizza (6/1/2010)</b>
Prepare a Public Outreach Strategy	Department of Public Works	Moderate	October 2009  Postpone until 2011	This effort will be evaluated during FY 2011.
Continue to provide mitigation materials in the library.	Department of Public Works and Department of Land Use and Planning	Low	Update Annually	Library card catalogue reviewed and updated materials provided to the County Library in August 2010.